



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

January 26, 2020

Governor Ron DeSantis
State of Florida
The Capitol
400 South Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL, 32399

Dear Governor DeSantis,

Thank you for your leadership in combatting the COVID-19 pandemic in the state of Florida. I write to you today with concerns about the internal distribution of Florida's allotment of vaccines. While the Federal government has empowered the states to distribute the vaccine internally, I am concerned that the current distribution timetable is leaving behind high concentrations of the elderly within the state. I believe more of Florida's allotment should be distributed faster in order to give our local communities the tools they need to bring an end to the current crisis.

Specifically, within my district, I am concerned that they are not considering the number of seniors per capita when distributing the vaccine. For example, Charlotte County has a median age of 66.9 and the city of Punta Gorda has 68 percent of its residents over the age of 65. Despite this, according to local officials, their initial allotment was about 3,000 vaccines – far below the amount necessary to vaccinate the elderly of Punta Gorda let alone the elderly of Charlotte County. Highlands County, with 36,000 residents over the age of 65, received an initial allotment of just 1,360 vaccines.

Further, the layers of bureaucracy in releasing the vaccine in installments is resulting in miscommunications that threaten to slow down the pace of vaccinations. As of January 15th, the city of Venice reported that while they have a vaccination site prepared, they had yet to receive communication about when they would receive their allotment or the size of such. As of that same date, both Charlotte and Sarasota counties had yet to learn about the size or delivery date of their next allotment. Highlands County reported that their registration site for available appointments was filled within twenty minutes and, as of January 13th, they had over 14,000 individuals on a waiting list.

I eagerly await your response on how we will successfully complete the vaccination program for our Floridians.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Gregory Steube', written in a cursive style.

W. Gregory Steube
Member of Congress